

Synopsis of Rural Fringe Growth Management Plan (GMP) Amendments

Pursuant to the June 22, 1999 Final Order from the Florida Administration Commission, a 3-year assessment of the Rural Fringe study area (an area generally located between the coastal Urban area and Golden Gate Estates) was conducted by a County Commission-appointed citizen advisory committee with assistance from County staff and other government agencies, and with participation by a variety of stakeholders/interested parties. This culminated in the adoption of GMP amendments on June 19, 2002, primarily for the Rural Fringe area of the County. Due to legal challenges, those original amendments did not become effective until the Florida Department of Community Affairs issued its Final Order on July 22, 2003. Subsequent amendments have occurred. Please note: this is only a summary of the adopted amendments and should not be relied upon to make land use decisions; some specific properties have standards/limitations/requirements different from others within the same designation.

1. **Rural Fringe study area lands** were designated as Rural Fringe Mixed Use District (RFMUD) Sending Lands, Receiving Lands, or Neutral Lands, based primarily upon their environmental value as viewed at the landscape-scale, not site-specific scale. Additionally, within the Sending Lands, some properties are also designated as Natural Resource Protection Area (NRPA) - areas of highest environmental value. (NRPAs also exist outside of the Rural Fringe area.) *Agricultural land uses are permitted in all land use designations; however, in the Sending designation, only those consistent with the Florida Right to Farm Act are allowed.*
2. **Preservation and Native vegetation retention** standards were established in order to protect environmentally sensitive areas, based largely upon a landscape-scale view of lands. Those standards vary, as noted below; however, for smaller parcels, there is a minimum clearing allowance.
 - a. Receiving: 40% of native vegetation, not to exceed 25% of total site;
 - b. Neutral: 60% of native vegetation, not to exceed 45% of total site;
 - c. Sending: the greater of 80% of native vegetation or 80% of total site;
 - d. Sending/NRPA: the greater of 90% of native vegetation or 90% of total site.
3. A **voluntary Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program** was established as a mechanism for compensating Sending Lands property owners; the value of their land has been, or is presumed to have been, negatively affected by these amendments. Through the TDR program, residential development rights may be transferred from Sending Lands to Receiving Lands and, on a limited basis, to Urban designated lands. Neutral Lands are not eligible to participate in the TDR program; lands under public ownership are not eligible to participate in the TDR program.
4. **Sending Lands** are areas of higher environmental value; accordingly, they have more restrictive protection standards and a more restrictive list of permitted uses. Residential density is limited to 1 DU/40 acres, or pre-existing parcel size of <40 acres if created prior to 6/22/99. Residential density may be transferred at a ratio of 1 DU/5 acres, or pre-existing parcel size of <5 acres if created prior to 6/22/99 and lawfully existing; this is known as the base TDR Credit. However, there are also TDR bonuses provided for: Early Entry, Environmental Restoration and Maintenance, Conveyance, and Rural Village. Once development rights (TDR Credits) have been severed, allowable land uses are further restricted - agricultural uses are allowed to continue but cannot be intensified.

5. **Neutral Lands** have an intermediate level of environmental protection standards. Permitted uses are virtually the same as prior to the Final Order. Residential density is allowed at 1 DU/5 acres. These lands are "neutral" to the TDR program - they are not eligible to send or receive dwelling unit rights. For parcels ≥ 40 acres, clustering is allowed.
6. **Receiving Lands** are areas of lesser environmental value; as such, they have the least restrictive protection standards and broadest list of permitted uses. Residential density is allowed at 1 DU/5 acres; for parcels ≥ 40 acres, this density may be increased via TDR Credits to a maximum of 1 DU/acre.
7. **Exceptions to the above density limitations** include: (a) Density Blending: allows some larger properties that straddle the Urban boundary – that is, partially within the RFMUD and partially within the Urban area - to shift their allowable density so as to protect environmentally sensitive lands; and, (b) Rural Villages: depending upon location, allows a density of between 1.5 and 3 DU/A, with requirement to use TDR Credits. For Rural Villages: commercial, recreational and institutional uses are allowed and required; depending upon location, a greenbelt is required around the perimeter; depending upon location, the size is limited to between 300 and 2,500 acres; and, a public facilities impact analysis is required.
8. The **Rural Transition Water and Sewer District** was established to allow for provision of County central water and sewer to all Receiving Lands and most Neutral Lands.
9. When a **parcel is cleared for agricultural purposes**, there is a 25-year prohibition on using TDR Credits; similarly, there is a 25-year prohibition on converting to non-agricultural uses, unless the habitat is restored.
10. **“Existing land uses”** are allowed to continue. This includes: uses for which all required permits were issued prior to 6/19/02; projects for which a Conditional Use or Rezone petition was approved prior to 6/19/02; land use petitions for which a completed application was submitted prior to 6/19/02.
11. The **+305 acres** adjacent to the west of the landfill, in Section 36, T49S, R26E, was **designated as Rural - Industrial District**. And, that District was modified so as to allow the same uses as in the Urban - Industrial District.
12. A **re-designation policy** was established whereby the owners of land located along the edge of a Sending area may submit data to demonstrate there was no longer environmental value to the site (as of 2002), such that it warrants change from Sending designation to the abutting designation (Receiving or Neutral). The time period for this provision has lapsed. Approximately 200 acres were re-designated through this provision.
13. A **North Belle Meade Overlay** was established, resulting from an agreement between intervener parties to previous GMP amendments, that: reduces the development limitations and environmental protection standards for the Receiving Lands within the Overlay; and, includes framework for extending existing road(s)/providing new road(s) in this area.
14. A provision was included requiring the necessary **implementing land development regulations** to be developed within one year.